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nestrans

The Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Shire

annual report ^{06/07}



may 2007

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foreword

Our Annual Report for 2006-07 provides an update on progress over the past year, which has been one of change and achievement for Nestrans. We successfully made the transition from a voluntary partnership to a statutory body, we produced a long-term Regional Transport Strategy and have maintained momentum on our key projects, most notably securing Ministerial commitment to re-open Laurencekirk station, which will be the first rail station to open in the north east for over twenty years.

Our Corporate Plan, published in September 2006 set out our purpose to develop and deliver strategic transport improvements that support and improve the economy, environment and accessibility for all across Aberdeen City and Shire. Now that our Regional Transport Strategy has been produced, the priority is to work with our partners to make its vision a reality.

I am standing down from Nestrans so this is a task that I leave to my successor as Chair to take forward. It is a privilege to have been part

of Nestrans over the past five years and as Chair to have led the organisation in its first year as a statutory body. We have seen the benefits of partnership working at a regional level and been supported by a Scottish Government that has significantly increased funding for transport. This has led to major commitments to deliver the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, upgrade the A90 between Balmedie and Tipperty and support the development of Aberdeen Crossrail.

My time with Nestrans has been an enjoyable and rewarding experience. I would like to thank everyone who I have worked with over that time for their support and commitment and wish you well in meeting the challenges ahead.

ALISON MCINNES
CHAIR

review of the year

the nestrans team

The Nestrans Board comprises 8 councillors nominated by Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils and 4 non-councillor members appointed in a personal capacity by the Minister for Transport following open advertisement and selection. The Board has itself appointed as Advisers the chief transport officials of both Councils. The full time Executive team report to the Board. Derick Murray will succeed Peter Cockhead as Director from June 2007.

board (to may 07)

Cllr Alison McInnes, Chair (Aberdeenshire Council)
Cllr Kate Dean, Deputy Chair (Aberdeen City Council)
Eddie Anderson, Deputy Chair (Managing Director, ARR Craib Transport Ltd)
Cllr Scott Cassie (Aberdeen City Council)
Jennifer Craw (Chief Executive, Scottish Enterprise Grampian)
Cllr Audrey Findlay (Aberdeenshire Council)
Cllr Marcus Humphrey (Aberdeenshire Council)
Cllr Sandra Macdonald (Aberdeen City Council)
George Mair (Managing Director, First Aberdeen)
David Sullivan (Director of Corporate Planning, NHS Grampian)
Cllr Stan Tennant (Aberdeenshire Council)
Cllr Ian Yuill (Aberdeen City Council)

advisers

Dr Maggie Bochel (Aberdeen City Council)
Iain Gabriel (Aberdeenshire Council)

executive team

Peter Cockhead (Director)
Rab Dickson (Principal Transport Executive)
Ben Kerfoot (Transport Executive - Policy)
Matthew Eastwood (Transport Executive - Travel Plans)
Louise Smith / Nicolle Milne (Office Manager and PA to Director)

As one of Scotland's seven new statutory Regional Transport Partnerships that came into operation on 1 April 2006, Nestrans was fortunate to inherit the structures, work and name of the voluntary partnership which preceded it. However, this also brought added challenges. Besides needing to put in place all the organisational arrangements required of a statutory body and preparing a Regional Transport Strategy to the Scottish Executive's exacting timescale, Nestrans was also expected to keep up the pace on moving key strategic transport projects through to delivery.

The fact that this has been accomplished has been thanks to the commitment and concerted efforts of Board members and the Executive team, along with the support of officials from both Councils. Working together is central to Nestrans' approach and has been crucial to our achievements over the past year.

The inherited partnership tradition has also been maintained particularly through the North East Transport Consultative Forum, involving a wide range of transport stakeholders in the region. It has been further developed through Nestrans becoming a core partner in the Community Planning Partnerships and by the establishment of an Association of Regional Transport Partnerships across Scotland.

This Annual Report largely focuses on the four main work strands for 2006/07 as set out in

the Corporate Plan – Regional Transport Strategy, Major Infrastructure Projects, Travel Planning and Capital Programme. As explained in the following pages major progress has been made across all fronts. A summary of expenditure is provided, but the Annual Accounts will only be published in the autumn, following auditing.

The foundations are now in place for Nestrans to help turn the transport strategy for 2021 into reality. The focus will shift over the next year from strategy development to delivery. This will present new challenges for project management and funding. It will also require consideration to be given to whether it may be appropriate for Nestrans to take on additional transport powers to ensure efficient and effective delivery of key transport priorities. But above all it will demand continued close liaison and partnership working with both Councils and the transport operators.

Further information about our strategy and projects is available on our website at www.nestrans.org.uk.

PETER COCKHEAD
DIRECTOR

regional transport strategy

Producing and overseeing the implementation of a long term Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) is Nestrans' main statutory responsibility and its preparation has been a major focus of work throughout 2006-07. The finalised RTS was submitted, as required, to Scottish Ministers by the end of March 2007 and Ministerial approval is expected in the summer.

The Strategy

The RTS builds on the Modern Transport System (MTS), a strategy to 2011 that was developed by the voluntary Nestrans in 2002-03 and formed the basis for its activities. The MTS contains many projects that are already being delivered and others which are taken forward and developed further in the RTS.

The strategy is based on detailed analysis and consultation, sets strategic objectives and details a comprehensive package of measures covering external and internal connections and a policy framework for influencing travel behaviour. Taken together, the RTS and the existing MTS projects total a £1 billion package. The strategy was developed by Nestrans with consultancy support from Steer Davies Gleave, who developed a Dynamic Model for the north east to help identify and prioritise projects and measures to deliver the strategy's objectives.

Process

The RTS was developed in an inclusive manner, involving close working with both local authorities and consultation with stakeholders and the wider public. Throughout it has been important to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 and the subsequent Guidance issued by the Scottish Executive.

In developing the strategy it has also been important to link to the National Transport Strategy, published in December 2006, as well as Local Transport Strategies and other land use, economic, environmental and community plans and strategies. In line with legislation, Nestrans also undertook a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to identify any possible environmental impacts of strategy options.

Initial consultation took place with the North East Transport Consultative Forum on the Issues and Objectives in July 2006 and on Option Generation in September 2006. This early consultation helped shape the draft RTS which was published for full public

consultation in December 2006. Following consideration of almost 200 consultation responses received, the strategy was revised and approved by the Nestrans Board on 14 March prior to submission to Scottish Ministers. It is available on our website along with supporting information. Once approved by the Minister, the RTS will be re-published and widely publicised.

The Year Ahead

To take forward the RTS, we will be developing a detailed Delivery Plan for the strategy covering a 3-year period accompanied by a 5-year Investment Plan. We are also developing three targeted Action Plans for Buses, Freight and Health and Transport in partnership with stakeholders. Delivering the RTS will require partnership working with local authorities, Transport Scotland, transport operators and others and significant investment.

major infrastructure projects

While the Regional Transport Strategy has been the focus of a lot of work over the past year, we have also been working hard to take forward the development of major infrastructure projects forming part of the 2011 Modern Transport System strategy.

Rail

Nestrans is committed to developing rail services for passengers and freight to provide better external connections and local travel. The big achievement this year was securing Scottish Executive commitment to re-open Laurencekirk station. Nestrans has agreed to meet 20% of the £3.2 million costs and the project is now being taken forward by Transport Scotland and Network Rail. The station is expected to open in 2008.

We have also been progressing plans for better local rail services through the Aberdeen Crossrail project. This involves improving the frequency of train services between Inverurie, Aberdeen and Stonehaven and potentially

opening new stations. Linked to this are plans to improve and regularise services between Aberdeen and Inverness. A detailed feasibility study into Crossrail is being completed and Nestrans will work closely with Transport Scotland and the rail industry to take its conclusions forward. We are also continuing to support the work of the North East Scotland Rail Freight Development Group to attract more freight to switch to rail to benefit from the completion of the gauge enhancement work in autumn 2007.

Strategic Roads

Work to identify solutions to major congestion points on the trunk roads through Aberdeen has moved forward over the past year.

Nestrans has been working with Transport Scotland and Aberdeen City Council to identify options to tackle congestion at the A90/A96 Haudagain Roundabout. This study is expected to be completed by autumn 2007. In partnership with Transport Scotland and both local authorities we have also

commissioned the next stage of appraisal to recommend options to improve access from the A90 south to Aberdeen. We have also worked with Transport Scotland and HITRANS on an initial study to identify problems and improvements options for the A96 Aberdeen – Inverness corridor.

Nestrans is also continuing to support the work of Transport Scotland and the Managing Agent team in taking forward the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route project. This reached a major milestone in December 2006 with the publication of draft road orders. Nestrans RTS contains measures which complement and lock-in the benefits of the AWPR.

Air and Sea

Over the past year Nestrans has continued to play a major role in supporting the Airport's expansion in particular through the development of the Airport's Surface Access Strategy, which is due to be published later in

2007 and participation in the Aberdeen Airport Business Development Forum. Approval of an extension to the runway was a major step forward, which paves the way for more modern aircraft and new destinations. Nestrans is also working closely with the north east port authorities, to promote joint working and consider surface access issues. To support this, Nestrans has led the development of a North East Ports Forum which brings together public and private sector partners.

The Year Ahead

The key challenges will be working with Transport Scotland to agree a way forward for Crossrail and ensuring that Laurencekirk station opens on time. It will also be important to complete the current trunk road studies and secure Ministerial commitment to implement improvements, especially at the Haudagain roundabout. We will also continue to support the development of the AWPR and work with private sector partners to help achieve our common goals.



travel planning

Nestrans is committed to promoting travel plans and travel awareness; encouraging active and sustainable travel such as walking and cycling, using public transport and car sharing.

Building on the work of the voluntary partnership and with specific funding from the Scottish Executive, Nestrans has a dedicated member of staff responsible for the promotion of travel plans and travel awareness and as required by the Scottish Executive has developed a Travel Planning Strategy which was published in August 2006.

The Nestrans Travel Planning Strategy identifies three areas for action, which Nestrans is committed to develop: Travel Plans, Direct Interventions and Travel Awareness.

Travel Plans

Nestrans is working in close liaison with the Scottish Executive, other Regional Transport Partnerships, Local Authorities and sustainable travel organisations to coordinate delivery and develop and share best practice in travel plans and travel awareness. We have also taken a lead role in the Scottish Sustainable Travel Group and National TravelWise Association.

Nestrans is committed to promoting Travel Plans and continues to support and co-ordinate the development of Travel Plans by public sector employers in the north east in line with the Scottish Executive's targets.

Nestrans is also actively engaged in promoting the benefits of Travel Plans and providing free advice and assistance to private sector employers in the region.

Direct Interventions

Nestrans funded the creation and development of a Transport Management Organisation (TMO) for Dyce. The Dyce TMO has led the way as a pilot organisation in business travel planning in the UK and has received a number of awards. Nestrans will continue to support the work of the Dyce TMO and we are working to identify further opportunities for the development of TMOs in both Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire.

We provide a Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme offering matched funding of up to £10,000 to organisations investing in measures encouraging sustainable travel. Nestrans has reviewed and re-launched the scheme and applications can now be made online at: www.nestrans.org.uk/stgs. Nestrans has also published and distributed promotional material about the scheme throughout the north east of Scotland.

Nestrans supports and encourages car sharing through the Nestrans Car Share Scheme, www.nestranscarshare.com, highlighting the benefits of car sharing. The Nestrans car share scheme has recently been re-branded and will continue to be actively promoted through leaflets and other published material.

Travel Awareness

Nestrans will continue to promote travel awareness to the public, working with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils to encourage participation in national and international events such as Green Transport Week, Bike2Work Week and European Mobility Week, and organising or supporting at least three travel awareness events or publications annually.

The Year Ahead

Nestrans will build on success to date, working with employers to promote travel plans and travel awareness and working to identify further opportunities for the development of TMOs particularly in the Westhill and Altness areas. Nestrans will also continue to grow its Car Share Scheme, www.nestranscarshare.com with the aim of doubling the membership.



capital programme

Nestrans receives an annual capital grant from the Scottish Executive to support direct investment in regionally strategic transport projects. In 2006-07 this was just over £3 million. The detailed programme was agreed by the Nestrans Board in May 2006 and delivery of the projects has been undertaken by the constituent local authorities. Progress reports on the delivery of the programme are provided to each Nestrans Board meeting.

Quality Bus Corridors

A major focus has been improving bus infrastructure on key bus routes to provide new bus stops and shelters and installing raised kerbs which make boarding easier. Expenditure has focused on the main corridors from Westhill, Inverurie, Peterhead, Fraserburgh and Pitmedden/Tarves into Aberdeen, which also serve passengers within the City, as well as the route between Northfield and Torry, via the Foresterhill hospitals. Work to upgrade traffic signals to provide improved bus priority has also taken place at various locations in Aberdeen.

Strategic Cycle Routes

In the past year detailed design work has been completed for a major cycle route upgrade between Westhill, Kingswells and Aberdeen. It is hoped that construction will commence over the next few months, funded from Nestrans' 2007-08 capital programme. In addition design has commenced on a new route along the River Don in Aberdeen and along Riverside Drive, by the River Dee. In Peterhead, Nestrans has supported the construction of sections of a new cycle route around the town. Work has also been undertaken to develop strategic cycle routes

on the A90 between Newtonhill and Cove and along the A96 from Inverurie.

Railway station facilities

In order to accommodate increasing demand for rail based Park and Ride, Nestrans has funded the extension of the car park at Inverurie station. We have also funded feasibility study work to examine options to expand parking provision at Stonehaven station. An initial extension will now be taken forward by Network Rail and First ScotRail. Unfortunately the proposal to install CCTV and customer information at Portlethen was not able to go ahead, but remains an aspiration for the future.

Demand Responsive Transport

Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) is increasingly recognised as an important strand of public transport provision particularly suitable to those who have difficulty in accessing scheduled services, because of location or special needs. The DRT services introduced by the two Councils have proved increasingly popular. This year Nestrans funded the purchase of two new buses for Aberdeenshire and one for Aberdeen City to enable these services to further expand.

The Year Ahead

The outline programme for 2007-08 was approved by the Nestrans Board in April 2007 and takes forward the priorities in the RTS and builds on investment to date. The key themes of the programme are rail, strategic road improvements, bus improvements, DRT, strategic cycle routes and an allocation to each local authority for local transport projects.

budget and expenditure

Nestrans' revenue budget for 2006-07 was £1,035,000, with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils each contributing £175,000 and the Scottish Executive contributing £685,000. The revenue budget set out below funds the core running costs of Nestrans, production of the Regional Transport Strategy and development work for strategic transport projects.

The revenue budget for 2007-08 will increase to £1,085,000 with each of the Councils contributing £175,000 and the Scottish Executive, £735,000. The bulk of this

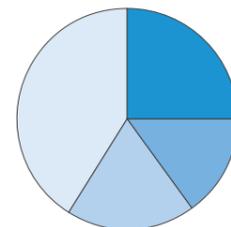
expenditure will focus on taking forward the development of projects within the RTS.

Nestrans' Capital Budget for 2006-07 was £3,011,000 which has been used to deliver strategic transport projects as set out below. The capital allocation for 2007-08 remains £3,011,000.

The details below show current expected outturn expenditure against the budgets, however the detailed final accounts will be published later this year once they have been audited.

Revenue Budget 2006-07

	budget	expected outturn
Core costs (office and staffing)	£255,000	£232,000
Core costs (other support costs)	£160,000	£160,000
Regional Transport Strategy	£200,000	£200,000
Project Development	£420,000	£420,000
Total	£1,035,000	£1,012,000

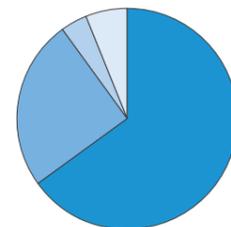


budget

- Core costs (office and staffing)
- Core costs (other support costs)
- Regional Transport Strategy
- Project Development

Capital Budget 2006-07

	budget	expected outturn
Quality bus corridors	£1,936,000	£1,988,617
Strategic cycle routes	£720,000	£563,000
Railway station facilities	£155,000	£98,000
Demand responsive Transport	£200,000	£200,000
Total	£3,011,000	£2,849,617



budget

- Quality bus corridors
- Strategic cycle routes
- Railway station facilities
- Demand responsive Transport